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TWO RECENT BOOKS ON MISSIONS

Doctor Mabie has published a vigorous and telling defense of the right of the church to propagate Christian truth among peoples who hold the ethnic faiths.[1] His proposition is that

> Christianity holds the supreme conception of the oneness of mankind; it alone cherishes the idea of a redemptive purpose—a cure for sin—at the heart of God; it places a premium upon the faith principle conceived as loyalty to present light; it is the one religion which centers in a unique divine-human person; it alone guarantees human well-being in providence irrespective of outward, circumstantial conditions; and it affords the only practical hope of godlike character and final blessedness like his own.

The present little book is a presentation, in somewhat modified form, of the same author's previous deliverances on similar subjects, the first part was prepared for the Congress of Arts and Sciences of the St. Louis Exposition in 1904 and the second part appeared in this *Journal*, Vol. XI, No. 1, in a symposium on the question "Has Christianity the Moral Right to Supplant Ethnic Faiths?"

Doctor Vedder's book[2] is an apologetic too, but unconsciously so. His proposition would be that "nineteen centuries have proved that Christianity is the only religion which has the power of regeneration for a man or for a nation." This proposition is never argued, with the possible exception of the introductory chapter on the "Philosophy of Christian Missions." There is, however, a cumulative presentation of the truth of the proposition. The book is not a history of missions, such as Warneck's or Merriam's. It is rather a presentation, as the title promises, of the salient epochs in missionary advance, grouped about the personality of the men who were the leaders in the various periods, as is indicated by the chapter headings. But the book is really a study of a phase of history for the purpose of arriving at principles. And here lies its value. Uhlhorn and Ratzinger in their *Geschichte der christlichen Liebesthätigkeit* and *Geschichte der kirchlichen Armenpflege* have given us some historical sketches which miss the point, for the reason that they are written for the purpose of defending the claims of the protestant or Roman systems of

[1] *The Divine Right of Missions; Or, Christianity the World-Religion and the Right of the Church to Propagate It.* A Study in Comparative Religion. By Henry C. Mabie. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society. 117 pages. 50 cents net.

[2] *Christian Epoch-Makers.* The Story of the Great Missionary Eras in the History of Christianity. By Henry C. Vedder. Philadelphia: The Griffith & Rowland Press. x+368 pages. $1.20 net.

ecclesiasticism. Doctor Vedder is not primarily concerned with defense, as just noted, but his very presentation of methods and demonstration of merit and demerit, makes this book a valuable apologetic. And what is still better, it preserves the method of proper scientific inquiry. His treatment of the great Romanist missionaries is as sympathetic as is that of the evangelicals. In connection with the chapter on Schwartz, Doctor Vedder argues for a very limited emphasis on mission schools, owing to competition with governmental institutions, and gives it as his conviction that over-emphasis on mission schools may frustrate the ends of evangelism. In connection with the chapter on Zinzendorf there are some generalizations as to missionary methods and ministerial professionalism, which are well worth careful perusal. The treatment of the Franciscan Tertiaries as a socializing influence is especially noteworthy. The case of Mohammedanism vs. Christianity is stated in burning words in the chapter on Livingstone. The value of this book lies in the bringing together in a unique manner of a vast mass of materials, in their lucid interpretation, and in the really fine generalizations, which are interpolated without obtrusiveness.

HUGO P. J. SELINGER

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

BRIEF MENTION

La liberté intellectuelle après l'Encyclique Pascendi. Lettre de Mgr. L'Evêque de Beauvais à un Deputé. Paris: Bauchesne, 1908. 43 pages. Fr. 0.80.

A vindication from the Roman Catholic point of view, of this remarkable pronunciamento. Modernism, which confines itself to the phenomenal, must be condemned, the Thomasian philosophy must be established, the church is right—has been right for 2,000 years—and "the bark of Peter will sail securely on."

PETAVEL-OLLIFF, E. *Une réforme urgente dans l'enseignement Évangélique.* Lettre ouverte à M. le pasteur R. Saillens. Reprint from the February issue of the Revue Chrétienne. Paris: Fischbacher. 1908. 15 pages.

A plea for reinvestigation of conditional immortality, fortified by the standard "proof texts" and the usual arguments of sanity, tranquillity, and candor.

SETON, ERNEST THOMPSON. *The Natural History of the Ten Commandments* New York: Scribner, 1907. 78 pages. $0.50.

The famous "nature faker" here invades the realm of theology and "proves" that "maybe in the instinct of the brute in extremity . . . . we have the root of what has come to fruit in the Realm of Light."